


Braille Monitor



NOVEMBER, 1975

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

A Publication of the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
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SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

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If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE AGENCIES REBUKES NAC

BY

KENNETH JERNIGAN

The National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB) met in San Francisco the week of September 8. During the past few years I have not attended these meetings, feeling that they were mostly a waste of time. However, I decided to go to this one, and I am glad that I did.

The NCSAB business meeting occurred at the Palace Hotel, Tuesday afternoon, September 9. As outgoing president, Burt Risley (Director of the Texas Commission for the Blind) was in the chair. Most of the states were represented. Dr. Andrew Adams (Federal Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration) was there.

During the first part of the meeting it was business as usual with hardly a ripple. Then Bob Pogorelc (Director of the Oregon Commission for the Blind and the incoming president of NCSAB) rose to make a motion, as follows:

"I move that the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind's payment of membership dues in the National Accreditation Council be conditioned upon more meaningful and definitive action on the part of NAC in revising its accreditation process in a manner consistent with the policy position unanimously adopted by the NCSAB on the issue of accreditation, with the adequacy of NAC's responsive action to be evaluated and determined by the Executive Committee. And that the NCSAB will provide a committee to work with NAC to this end."

The motion was seconded by Harry Vines, head of Services for the Blind in Arkansas.

There were a few unhappy murmurs from people like Floyd Cargill of Illinois, along with a considerable amount of discussion; but when the question was put and the votes were counted, the motion passed by a whopping majority. Howard Hanson (Director of Services for the Blind of South Dakota, and also a NAC Board member) voted against the motion, and there may have been surly objections from one or two others; but this only underscored the meaning of it all.

It was a resounding slap in NAC's face, and it will be interesting to see how NAC will set about trying to explain it away by claiming it really didn't mean what it said. NAC's repeated statements that the National Federation of the Blind is the only group in the field which doesn't support NAC is beginning to sound not only shopworn but a little plaintive. In fact, what other organization in the field besides ACB is wholeheartedly supporting NAC these days? Of course, one can mention the American Foundation for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Overseas Blind, but one organization by two names is still one organization, regardless of the window dressing; nor is anyone likely to forget that the American Foundation is NAC's parent, guardian, and keeper.

But back to the NCSAB meeting. Harry Vines was chosen president-elect, and Kenneth Hopkins (head of Services for the Blind in the State of Washington) was put on the board. It was a most productive and worthwhile meeting. □

SPEAKING OF NAC

BY

RICHARD BLEECKER

Editor's Note.—The following article is taken from the Fall 1975 issue of Dialogue magazine, including the introductory note.

What follows is a portion of an address by Dr. Richard Bleecker who became Executive Director of the National Accreditation Council on January 1, 1975. The address was delivered on July 23, during the opening session of the American Council of the Blind convention in Mobile, Alabama. Dr. Bleecker began by discussing the history of NAC with emphasis on the accrediting body's experience with consumer organizations. Then he addressed himself to the subject of NAC's present and future:

This morning I was sitting in for a little bit during the meeting of the Citizen Consumer Participation Commission. While there, I was pleased to learn that you are not only involved with helping the agencies learn how to involve consumers in their work in a meaningful way, but also that you recognize the importance of helping the consumer to prepare himself or herself for responsible participation and partnership with the agencies and the professionals. I think that Billie Elder's leadership seminars are another fine example of your constructive effort in this regard. And it's an important effort, too, for indeed, involvement is a two-way street. We expect, on the one hand, that the agencies and the professionals will be prepared to share their planning and decision-making responsibilities with you—and frankly, most professionals of my acquaintance are only too eager and ready

to begin to share their ulcers and headaches with you—but they also have high expectations that the consumers and the consumer organizations will be able to make a distinct, substantial, and valid contribution in strengthening the service programs and their management. Our expectations about agency behavior are expressed in a way in our support of standards and accreditation.

While there are no official standards nor any accreditation programs for consumer organizations, common sense tells us what characteristics in general we would look for in a responsible organization of that kind. Here are just a couple of points I would share with you that I think we might normally consider in assessing the accountability of a consumer organization: (1) It should be responsible. I should think, to its own constituency. By that we mean, its membership should be democratically involved in the organization's decision-making process; its leadership should provide full and fair information and services to its members; and the organization's members should know how its funds are raised and how they are spent.

The second characteristic that we might normally think about when we wonder how to evaluate consumer organizations is that the consumer organization should be responsive within the community of which it is a part—in other words, to the public. This means the organization should present itself, its size, its scope, and who it represents with a great deal of care, accuracy, and integrity. It means the organization should interpret constructively, fairly, and objectively, the democratically derived policies

of its members and be prepared to help the public to understand and be responsive to those policies. And, of course, it also means the organization that looks to the public for financial support should seek such support in an ethical manner and should tell the public how its funds have been used.

I am sure you could add other characteristics to this list or that you might state one or two of these differently than I have, but I think we can agree that these are the general kinds of characteristics that come to mind when we think about how to evaluate consumer organizations and assess their ability to be responsible. And, my friends, I think for anyone who takes the time to look at existing consumer organizations in our field in the light of expected characteristics such as these, the contrasts between the existing organizations become rather vividly and dramatically apparent, don't you think?

A resolution that came to my attention the other day illustrates this contrast in a rather interesting manner, and it's in relation to NAC standards, so I think I'd like to share it with you. It's a resolution that was adopted at the annual convention of the Iowa Council of the Blind; that's the ACB affiliate.

WHEREAS, NAC was established in order to improve the quality of services rendered by agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped; and,

WHEREAS, the structure and functioning of NAC is comparable to that of other accrediting instrumentalities such as those for schools, colleges, hospitals, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, Superintendent Woodcock of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School has evinced an intention to seek reaccreditation by NAC; and

WHEREAS, The Commission for the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind

have attempted, by all possible harassments, intimidation, and misrepresentation, to dissuade said Superintendent Woodcock from proceeding with his intention to seek reaccreditation: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Iowa Council of the Blind, meeting in annual convention in Marshalltown, Iowa, the 21st day of June, as follows:

(1) That we wholeheartedly approve and endorse the work of the National Accreditation Council.

(2) That we highly commend Superintendent Woodcock for his intention to bring his institution up to national standards and urge him to persist therein.

(3) That it is our consensus that the Iowa Commission for the Blind would better serve the blind population of Iowa and of the public by trying to bring its programs up to the standards used by NAC rather than by resorting to resentful, libelous, and vicious attacks on NAC.

Is that what you call that—mischief-making?

Well, there you have it—a straight shooting, clear, and, of course, a courageous statement.

For many of you here who believe in standards, as well as in ACB, this Iowa resolution might give you some ideas as to perhaps what could be done in your home state.

Someone else recently has issued a clear and courageous statement, too. Let me tell you a bit about it. The Honorable John Brademas, Congressman from Indiana and chairman of the Select Subcommittee on Education of the U.S. House of Representatives, has long been committed to

improving services to blind and other handicapped citizens. Because of his interest, he became very deeply concerned when charges and accusations against NAC were brought to his attention by NFB. You may remember Congressman Brademas as the one who called on the U.S. General Accounting Office, the official investigative arm of the Congress, to make a thorough study of these charges and accusations, a study which, as you know, did not sustain them. Since then, Mr. Brademas has been looking with great care at this whole thing to see what the fuss is all about. And, I am pleased to report, he has recently inserted a statement in the *Congressional Record* that uncompromisingly recognizes NAC as a responsible and effective standards-setting, accrediting body.

I am sure that those of you who have yourselves stood up and been counted on these issues will welcome Mr. Brademas' thoughtful public statement. For your associates back home who perhaps have hesitated to stand up for quality standards, whether because of confusion, misunderstanding, fear, or any other reason, the Congressman's detailed analysis of the facts should make it easier for them to reach their decision. I hope that you'll read Mr. Brademas' report yourselves and that you'll encourage those others to read it, too.

When we talk about standing up to be counted, an event occurred just this week that literally was just that—an actual counting of votes. It happened like this. This American Association of Workers for the Blind, an organization that strongly supports standards, and is an official sponsor of NAC, as I mentioned earlier, had three candidates for the office of president-elect, Mr. Burt Risley, Mrs. Mary Bauman, and Dr. Robert C. Krause. Their

positions on NAC became the central issue in that election. Mr. Risley, a most dedicated and capable leader in our field, known to very many of you, recently questioned the value or relevance of NAC standards and indicated that he just didn't want to stand up and be counted and get involved as far as NFB's campaign against NAC was concerned. Mrs. Bauman, a worker for and friend of the blind for many years, made clear her commitment to the recognized standards. Dr. Krause pointed out that, as administrator of a NAC-accredited agency and proud of it, he was personally convinced of the value of the standards. Well, it was clear to AAWB's membership where these candidates stood. So, guess what they did. In a democratic election using secret ballots, they voted to make Mrs. Bauman their president-elect, giving her 264 votes. Bob Krause, a strong contender, received 167 votes. One hundred eleven votes went to Mr. Risley who, I sincerely hope and believe, will learn from this experience that those who believe in working constructively and cooperatively to improve services for blind people through standards far outnumber those mischief-makers who would either control or destroy, and that he will soon rejoin the growing numbers who have stood up to be counted, who have called a spade a spade, although I think, Mr. President, that's not the best phrase to use here in Mobile.

Well, that brings us right up to the present moment and permits us to take a look into the future. NAC, despite the kinds of attacks and things that you know are going on, feels sincerely that all organizations of blind persons should be constructively participating in NAC. NAC has invited NFB on the same basis as it invited ACB and BVA to participate in NAC in the various ways I mentioned earlier. Of course,

so far NFB has refused. I presume that all you members who read the *Braille Forum* are certainly familiar with NFB's demand that it have ten members on NAC's board and that you be limited to only two members and the BVA just one. NFB has stated that this demand is a precondition to its constructive participation in NAC. NFB's demand would confine a limited or token role in NAC to ACB and BVA, respected organizations who have been working constructively with NAC for many years but with whom NFB sees itself in competition. This effort to stifle the perceived opposition, of course, does a great disservice to the cherished principles in our society that protect the rights of all citizens and groups. Because of this, the demands about such quotas have been seen as repugnant and unacceptable to all those involved with NAC.

We have no fear of NFB. NAC was established by the field and is an expression of our common desire in this field to provide and support a voluntary quality-control mechanism that will help improve services for blind people and help provide public accounting of its programs and its results. With the exception of NFB, NAC receives the strong support of the overwhelming majority of persons and organizations in this field who are so committed. And as we have seen, more and more of them are standing up to be counted every day. As long as this is the case, the field would never permit NFB or any other single organization from causing harm to NAC.

On the other hand, should NAC cease being responsive to the field, or should the time ever come for any reason when the field chooses not to support a standards-setting, accrediting program such as NAC, then the purpose or reason for NAC's

existence would be in grave doubt, irrespective of whether NFB was picking on us or not.

Meanwhile, and back to the positive, the cooperation of ACB with NAC has grown steadily through the years and we believe has benefited the entire field. This is certainly the case if it has meant that our standards are more meaningful and more meaningfully applied; if it means that blind people are beginning to be involved more emphatically in agency planning and service delivery; and if decisions to accredit or not accredit are making better use of the input from concerned local users of the service.

This is all coming to pass but we believe it is just the beginning. Let me suggest how you might help to build upon the progress that has been made. We hope that you will consider encouraging any agency from which you receive services to meet the nationally accepted standards that ACB helped to develop and which it is now helping to revise. If your local agency is already working to qualify for accreditation, be sure it knows of your willingness to help in its self-study and your willingness to support its efforts in that regard and your help in making improvements that may be called for to qualify. If your local agency is reluctant about trying to qualify for accreditation, you might encourage it by pointing out that accreditation is not a whip to beat agencies, but a lever to help the agencies raise the level of their services and their administration. Let the agency know that you expect that it can and will qualify for accreditation, with your assistance, of course. If your agency already is accredited, indicate your support for this recognition and offer your help if it seeks to make further improvements. If the agency is accredited and seems not to be

following any of the standards, as I mentioned earlier, first take the matter up with the proper persons in the agency and if you find there is no progress there, let NAC hear about the problem. If, as we hope, the accredited agency is making a sincere effort to make further improvements, remember they need your help and your understanding to continue to make those improvements. In ACB you have a

long tradition of constructive criticism and cooperation with existing and fine programs of service. In following that tradition you have brought about many changes to improve the lot of blind and visually handicapped Americans. I hope you will continue to follow it as ACB and NAC work together to improve and extend services to blind people throughout this great country of ours. □

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY

BY

B. T. KIMBROUGH

[From the Fall 1975 issue of *Dialogue* magazine.]

Some convention speeches are interesting because of what is said, others because of what is omitted. Richard Bleecker's address to the American Council of the Blind convention was unusual in that it managed to be both at the same time. On one level it was a candid, unashamed political speech aimed at increasing support for the National Accreditation Council of which Bleecker is executive director. On another it was an impressive study in the technique of using facts selectively. To me, however, the most significant portion of the speech was the part in which Bleecker introduced criteria for evaluating accountability of an organization of blind persons.

"Its membership should be democratically involved in the decision-making process. Its leaders should provide full and fair information to its membership. The organization's members should know how its funds are raised and how they are spent. The organization should present its size, its scope, and who it represents with a great deal of care, accuracy, and integrity. The organization should interpret constructively,

fairly, and objectively, the democratically derived policies of its members and be prepared to help the public to understand and be responsive to those policies. The organization that looks to the public for financial support should seek such support in an ethical manner and should tell the public how its funds have been used."

Having introduced these criteria, Bleecker went on to invite his listeners to apply them in the following manner:

"My friends, I think for anyone who takes the time to look at existing organizations in our field in the light of expected characteristics such as these, contrasts between the existing organizations become rather vividly and dramatically apparent, don't you think?"

While it is entirely understandable for Richard Bleecker to defend his agency against those who have been attacking it, it is surprising that he should go about it in this way. To my mind, Bleecker strongly

implied that the American Council of the Blind meets his suggested criteria and that the National Federation of the Blind does not. This is arbitrary talk, indeed, from someone who would further the cause of objective accreditation. Where is the documentation supporting Bleecker's apparent conclusion that ACB scores high in accountability and NFB does not? No accrediting body would make such statements about an agency without the fullest possible documentation. The criteria Bleecker outlined are his own and no one else's. However sensible they may be, they do not include the views of organization officers, directors, and members. No accrediting body would long endure if it tried to enforce standards which were formulated in this fashion. Of course, Bleecker was not conferring or denying accreditation during

his Mobile speech, but he was encouraging people to make judgments about organizations. Since accreditation is nothing more than a collective judgment about an agency, a serious inconsistency arises. Are we to believe that agencies for the blind deserve protection from irresponsible charges while organizations of blind persons do not, especially if they happen to be opponents of NAC? If this is what Bleecker meant to imply, he got his message across. If not, perhaps a change of tactic would be in order. While NAC is struggling for the financial and political support needed to keep it in operation, it cannot afford to sacrifice the principles which make its work meaningful. Otherwise, it might one day become a prosperous organization which stands for nothing, accomplishes nothing, and seeks nothing except its own survival. □

CALIFORNIA RAPS NAC'S KNUCKLES

NAC has always made a point of the need for professionalism in work for the blind and of late has put public emphasis on the additional need for accountability and integrity—for everyone in what they term "the field," including consumer organizations; for everyone that is, except NAC.

For years NAC has ridiculed the NFB as being mostly a paper organization. This was NAC's response to NAC's unsuccessful efforts to obtain NFB membership lists. Recently, in a speech which appears elsewhere in this issue, Dr. Bleecker, NAC's executive director, set forth standards for consumer organizations. Among them, "The organization should present its size, its scope, and who it represents with a great deal of care, accuracy, and integrity." The NFB has been doing that for years. But

NAC does not approve of NFB's methods for meeting these criteria—because NAC means and wants something else. They say they want the membership lists by which we would "prove" our existence and for such other purposes which we may not see as fit.

One wonders where NAC's lawyers have been for the last couple of decades, for the submission of such membership lists is illegal, under a long line of cases handed down by the United States Supreme Court, as an invasion of constitutional rights of both the organization and the individual members. As the Court stated in *NAACP v. State of Alabama* in 1960, where the State had demanded not only the books and slates of officers but membership lists, "We think that the production [of the lists of members] order . . . must be regarded as

entailing the likelihood of a substantial restraint upon the exercise by petitioner's members of their right to freedom of association. Petitioner has made an uncontroverted showing that on past occasions revelation of the identity of its rank-and-file members has exposed these members to economic reprisal, loss of employment, threat of physical coercion, and other manifestations of public hostility. Under these circumstances, we think it apparent that compelled disclosure of . . . membership is likely to affect adversely the ability of petitioner and its members to pursue their collective effort to foster beliefs which they admittedly have the right to advocate, in that it may induce members to withdraw from the Association and dissuade others from joining it because of fear of exposure of their beliefs shown through their associations and of the consequences of this exposure."

If it is an invasion of the members' privacy to submit lists of their names to local, state, or national units of government, why should NAC ask for them unless it thinks it has a right to them because it is above or outside the law. Perhaps NAC thinks that the officers of the NFB are so unaware that they will hand the lists to NAC out of ignorance. For NAC to make submission of lists a criterion for accreditation under NAC standards would be equally illegal.

The National Federation of the Blind has always operated on the ground that it is accountable to its constituents—its members and the public which supports it. The democratically elected leaders of the NFB know that if the membership is dissatisfied with any officer's performance, that officer would be replaced in short order. But NAC does not understand that there are differences in concepts of democracy and

because the NFB does not operate on the rules of some debating society. NAC draws its usually erroneous conclusions.

But what about NAC's professionalism, accountability, and integrity? NAC has stated that it is only responsible to the agencies it accredits. NFB has forced NAC to broaden its public stand, and that action was not voluntary, as *Monitor* readers are well aware. Such actions are window dressing. NAC believes and acts as though it is responsible only to itself.

Let us look more closely at some recent actions by NAC. Early in 1975, over the name of the deputy in charge of rehabilitation facilities, the California Department of Rehabilitation issued a memorandum without the approval of the Director, requiring all workshops wishing to do business with the State Department of Rehabilitation to be accredited—those having a majority of blind clients were to seek accreditation from NAC. When knowledge of this move became public, some of the members of the department's Advisory Committee for Services for the Blind and Partially Sighted objected and the problem was put on the agenda for the committee's meeting in June of 1975.

By the time the meeting took place, the Department Policy on Accreditation had been revised. It now directs that workshops or work activity centers shall seek accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and that "Agencies serving primarily legally blind clients are exempt from the Department's Policy on Accreditation. Due to the unique services offered, such agencies will be subject to program review and certification by the Department in accordance with Department-developed standards."

The matter was fully discussed at the June meeting of the advisory committee and the general consensus was to move ahead with department, committee, and voluntary personnel who were knowledgeable, to draw up California's standards. NAC took umbrage at the idea that anyone thought that someone else could write standards and took some very political and unprofessional actions. Dr. Bleecker began by writing to the Governor's Office in California. The Governor of California believes in consumers having active participation in policy-making in programs which affect them. The letter, consequently, was turned over to Acting Director of the Department of Rehabilitation Harry Towne for reply.

The exchange speaks volumes on both sides. NAC displays its usual arrogance and Mr. Towne lets NAC know in most succinct terms that the sovereign State of California has no taste for gratuitous insults from a self-serving private organization based in New York.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, August 13, 1975.

Ms. SUZANNE MCKAY,
*Staff Assistant,
Governor's Office,
Sacramento, California.*

DEAR MS. MCKAY: Thank you for your August 4 letter to Henry Talbert, a member of the Board of Directors of the National Accreditation Council, which has been referred to me for reply.

The decision by the Department of Rehabilitation to establish and apply its

own standards for rehabilitation facilities serving the blind, while relying upon the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for all other rehabilitation facilities, is one which we hope your office will review. Several states have endeavored to develop their own standards in these areas, only to find the process to be unduly cumbersome and duplicative of the system already available through nationally recognized accrediting, standard-setting bodies such as NAC and CARF. Furthermore, the steps required for the state to measure, in an efficacious manner, rehabilitation facility adherence to the standards invariably consume more of the precious tax resources than the state is willing or able to divert to this activity.

For these reasons, we suggest that the Department of Rehabilitation revise its policy to utilize both CARF and NAC, in their appropriate roles, as had been recommended by the California Association of Rehabilitation Facilities and, indeed, initially specified by the Department.

It is my understanding that the Department of Rehabilitation has received certain allegations about NAC that may have precipitated its revision of its initial policy on accreditation. I am enclosing a copy of a report entitled "Charges Made by the National Federation of the Blind Against the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped," which contains the findings of an investigation of these allegations by the U.S. General Accounting Office. The investigation, which does not sustain the allegations, was requested by the Honorable John Brademas, chairman. Select Subcommittee on Education of the House of Representatives.

Also enclosed is a copy of comments about NAC which recently were inserted in

the *Congressional Record* by Mr. Brademas. In his introduction he says, "Through the efforts of NAC, there has been an upgrading of programs serving the blind and visually handicapped that has yielded important results for these handicapped citizens." Mr. Brademas' inquiries and favorable public notice of NAC at this time have helped clarify the issues for many of those who had had the allegations against NAC thrust at them. Should there be any remaining question which the Department of Rehabilitation or the Governor's Office might have about the ability of NAC, as a respected, legitimate standard-setting and accrediting body, to function effectively in its unique role, I respectfully request that you so advise us and give us the opportunity to provide the facts.

Your letter advises me that the Department's policy was revised following discussion with its Advisory Committee for Services to the Blind and Partially Sighted, which includes persons representing three organizations serving the blind and which unanimously supported the change.

Since the overwhelming majority of responsible opinion in this field supports NAC's program (the enclosures to this letter include listings of our official supporters), I am interested in learning more about the Advisory Committee's function, composition, representativeness, and decision-making processes.

Would you be so kind as to provide me with a statement of the Committee's purpose, the names of the three organizations that are represented, as well as a copy of the minutes or other record which contains the substance of the Committee's discussion of the accreditation issue?

Thank you for your interest in strengthening the quality of services to blind and

visually handicapped Californians. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

RICHARD W. BLEECKER, Ed. D.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY,
DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION,
Sacramento, California, August 27, 1975.

RICHARD W. BLEECKER, Ed. D.,
*Executive Director,
National Accreditation Council,
New York, New York.*

DEAR DR. BLEECKER: The Office of Governor Brown has referred to me your letter of August 13, 1975, regarding accreditation. In responding thereto I wish to emphasize the following points.

Our decision not to use the services of a nationally recognized organization for accreditation of agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped was in no way influenced by the relationship between NAC and the National Federation of the Blind; such relationship is simply irrelevant to the issue.

The inference that we are unable or unwilling to set standards for facilities serving the blind and visually handicapped or to efficaciously measure adherence to such standards is totally unwarranted. We are committed to improving services to our blind and visually handicapped citizens. We regard standard setting for facilities serving these people and adherence thereto as an opportunity to further such commitment.

Not only have we the commitment; we also have the capability.

Sincerely,

HARRY TOWNE,
Acting Director.

The matter came up again at the meeting of the Advisory Committee for Programs for the Blind and Partially Sighted in September. There was additional argument pro and con about the advisability of using or not using NAC standards as against the State's own. Again the matter of the costs of NAC review teams, the irrelevancy of their standards, especially to conditions and problems in California, and our own ability to do a proper job were reviewed. Mr. Towne also reported to the committee that during the September meetings of administrators of programs for the blind

and related groups, he had had a meal with Dr. Bleecker where the matter was discussed. Mr. Towne said that he made it clear to Dr. Bleecker that in the matter of the Department of Rehabilitation's relationship with NAC, the NFB played no part. That he was perfectly able to think for himself and to draw his own conclusions and that he resented NAC's attitude on all counts.

The advisory committee then adopted a motion fully supporting the actions of the Acting Director and urged him to go on with the work of drawing up standards. Of the seven-member committee, there were five "ayes," one abstention, and one "no" vote.

At present two recreation centers for the blind are accredited by NAC in California. It will take more of NAC's version of professionalism, integrity, and accountability to increase the number. □

IS IT CLEAR, MR. ROBINSON?

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,

New York, New York, August 19, 1975.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
*President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: I am writing to invite you to assist us at this time by bringing to our attention one or two persons who if appointed would serve with distinction on NAC's Commission on Standards or Commission on Accreditation.

The Commission on Standards is responsible for the development of the standards,

and for reviewing and revising existing standards when indicated.

The Commission on Accreditation is concerned with the accreditation program including self-studies and on-site reviews, and the reaccreditation program.

Each Commission consists of nine individuals who serve terms of three years. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms, and the terms are so staggered that three appointments for each Commission are considered annually.

We would be pleased to give consideration to any candidate(s) you or your organization might suggest for either or both of the

Commissions. I hope that it will not be inconvenient for you to reply before the end of September.

Sincerely yours,

DANIEL D. ROBINSON.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
Des Moines, Iowa, September 9, 1975.

Mr. DANIEL D. ROBINSON, *President,*
National Accreditation Council for Agencies
Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: In your letter of August 19, 1975, you said you hoped "it would not be inconvenient for" me "to reply before the end of September." It isn't, and I am. I received a similar letter from NAC last year, and a copy of my answer (dated December 6, 1974) was sent to you.

You now write me the same letter again as if nothing at all had happened—as if there had not been a Kettner case, as if NAC had not rejected its own committee's recommendations for democracy, as if you had not been making perpetual war upon the blind while claiming to be doing the opposite, as if you had not been trying in the most unethical and unprofessional manner one could imagine to destroy personally the blind persons who have disagreed with you. In view of all of this one must wonder why you bothered to write me at all. The answer is disgustingly and shabbily clear. You are still trying to build your sordid little record. You will probably still be trying to do it when NAC drops into oblivion. So write to your heart's content; and here's to you Mr. Robinson.

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind.

□

RALPH SANDERS: THE PR EXECUTIVE, "BLIND ACTIVIST"

BY
WILLIAM G. CONLEY

[Reprinted by courtesy of the *Arkansas Gazette*, Little Rock, Arkansas.]

Editor's Note.—Mr. Sanders is Second Vice-President of the National Federation of the Blind and is also chairman of the NFB Public Relations Committee in which role he has done an outstanding job.

Ralph Sanders of Little Rock is what Superman buffs might describe as "a mild-mannered" public relations executive by profession, but whose real identity is that of a "blind activist."

Sanders, twenty-nine, the totally blind principal in the Concept-three advertising and public relations firm, works with his

partner, Harry Herget, on a multitude of Arkansas and regional advertising and public relations accounts. Yet he finds time to be Second Vice-President of the National Federation of the Blind, a task that has him traveling throughout the United States on behalf of the blind. He is also president of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas.

It was while he was attending California State University at Northridge that Sanders, blind since seven, first came in contact with members of the National Federation of the

Blind and learned that being blind does not have to mean that you are handicapped.

Sanders received his bachelor's degree from the California college and went on to Columbia University in New York City to receive his master's degree in journalism.

His blindness resulted from an accident—a shotgun blast that tore through his face, destroying his eyes.

Sanders was born on what he describes as a "primitive dirt-cotton farm in Grant County that didn't have electricity until 1953."

He grew up like other farm children, doing chores, milking cows, and working in the hay.

The day Ralph lost his eyesight does not figure in his mind as the day his life almost ended, but as the day when it really began.

"I went to find my brother who was carrying cotton sacks back to the cotton house near the barn," Ralph recalled. "He had his back to me, with the cotton sacks and a twenty-gauge shotgun he had just gotten for his birthday slung over his shoulder. When I was about sixty feet from him, the gun discharged, striking me in the face. He had no idea that I was anywhere around."

Fortunately for Sanders, his oldest brother had just come home on leave from the Army with a friend and a brand new car.

"My brother's Army friend, who was not emotionally involved, rushed me to the hospital in Little Rock where I spent six hours on the operating table," Ralph said.

The doctors told Sanders' parents that there was only a slight chance that he would pull through, and that if he did, they suspected that he might be retarded.

I was unconscious for six days and I don't really remember if it was an emotional shock to wake up and find myself blind," Ralph said. "I don't really think so.

"I think I was more fascinated with my new-found power and ability to manipulate people than I was with my blindness at this time," Ralph recalls.

After three weeks, Sanders was sent home.

"Following my return home to the farm, I think I felt trapped by my blindness," Ralph said. "I was discouraged from going out and playing so I stayed inside with my mother, listening to the soap operas on the radio and daydreaming a lot. In fairness to my family, I should add that after they adjusted to my blindness, I was encouraged to go out and play and to resume many of my chores."

Sanders' sister, Dee Karabinus, who lived in Little Rock, had gotten some information from the Arkansas School for the Blind. His parents at first rejected the idea of enrolling him in school again. Finally they relented and Ralph and his mother moved in with his sister, spending the week in Little Rock while Ralph attended classes and going to the farm on the weekends.

"Finally," Ralph recalled, "when I was in the fourth grade, I asked that I be allowed to stay in the dormitory with my friends and I think that experience had more effect on me than anything else. At the dormitory, I was thrown into a room with twenty other boys my age and older."

Somewhere along about the fifth grade, after having made emotional adjustments, Sanders became a good student and graduated high school with close to a straight "A" average.

"Schools for the blind, like the one I attended, are fading as a factor in the education of blind students," Ralph noted. "The trend is heavily in favor of mainstreaming the blind into the regular public school system. The academic education I received was more than adequate. There were very few students so we got a lot of individual attention. I had little trouble competing, academically, in college. Socially, however, residential schools are quite a different matter. I was not at all prepared for the adjustment I had to make into college life. Your social transactions are framed in an environment totally foreign to the experience of most people as they grow up."

Toward the end of his senior year, Sanders decided to major in journalism in college. "Why, I don't really know," Sanders said. "It seemed like an interesting thing to do and it was a nonblind field—that is, few blind persons had ever gone into journalism."

Sanders went to California where he entered California State University at Northridge.

"I was convinced that I could go out and do great things," Ralph said. "I had one hell of an experience. My first semester of college was terribly lonely. It was a different way of life. The school I had gone to prior to this had around one hundred thirty students. Now I was thrust into the middle of thirteen thousand students."

"I wanted to get active in the student newspaper," he remembers, "but I was afraid. I used to sit in the stairway outside the newspaper office and listen to the excitement going on in there and wish that I was part of it."

Finally, in his second semester, Ralph mustered the courage to ask the editor, Bob Rawitch, who is now a reporter for

The Los Angeles Times, if he could be involved in the student newspaper.

Rawitch told Sanders: "Look, we will welcome you here and we'll do everything we can to help you, but we'll expect you to do everything that everyone else does."

"I told Bob, 'That's fantastic, that is what I'm looking for.'"

From then on Ralph was involved. For two years, he had more column inches of news copy printed than any other reporter and achieved the position of editor-in-chief. He also became involved in campus organizations and politics. According to Sanders: "I had a terribly happy and successful college experience after the first semester."

Socially, Ralph was also in for an education.

"I rebelled against the idea of being around other blind people," Ralph noted, "or being compared with them. I made the mistake that many blind people make. I felt I was better than other blind persons."

"In 1967, through association with members of the National Federation of the Blind, I began to accept a new image of blindness. I learned that blind people were successful in a variety of fields. I came to realize that success as a blind person is a factor of opportunity and not blindness. I have been terribly lucky. I had a lot of friends and a wonderful family who encouraged me to be successful. What might be termed my activist attitude stems from my commitment to do what I can to give other blind people the same opportunities I had."

Sanders' semester as editor of his college newspaper (he may have been the first totally blind editor of a daily newspaper) was an explosive one. According to Sanders,

the radical students took over the university administration building and held the president as a hostage.

"The newspaper coverage of the event also became controversial," Ralph said. "The liberals would come in yelling that I was a conservative, and the conservatives would accuse me of being liberal or radical. In all the furor, everybody forgot my blindness and the chairman of the journalism department wanted to fire me for the articles that I ran."

Sanders wasn't fired, and after the situation normalized the journalism faculty acknowledged Sanders' contributions by awarding him the "Most Outstanding Journalism Graduate in 1969" award. Sanders was obviously well-liked by his fellow journalism students at California State University, and later at Columbia. He was president of the student Sigma Delta Chi chapters at both universities.

When Sanders left California, he decided to attend graduate school at Columbia because it was in New York City, where a large part of the Nation's media is located.

Before he left for New York, Sanders married Terri Honnoll, who had been a friend for a number of years. They are now divorced, but they have one child, Zachary, five, who spends weekends on the Sheridan farm with his father.

"My year at Columbia gave me a rare opportunity to look at the major media closely. The only problem I faced at the end of the year, when I had gotten my master's was that I had a wife and now a child to support, so I set out to find a job."

"The first thing I decided was that I did not want to raise my son in New York City," Ralph recalled.

Sanders applied to the *Wall Street Journal*, feeling that he would have a good chance at a job since he had a background in economics during his postgraduate work.

"I didn't get the job, but I understand there was a six-month-long argument among the front page editors over whether I should have been hired, with my blindness being the issue."

"In the meantime," Ralph said, "I decided to return to Arkansas. I hoped there might be an opening on the (*Arkansas Gazette* or (*Arkansas Democrat*. There wasn't."

Sanders had heard that Winthrop Rockefeller's 1970 re-election campaign for Governor might need additional public relations personnel. He got the job in the PR office.

"My experience with the Rockefeller organization was satisfying," Sanders noted. "There were those on the staff who had difficulty accepting me as a blind person, but for the most part I was well accepted and expected to perform on a basis of ability. Even Governor Rockefeller, I believe, genuinely looked upon me as just another member of his staff. That's how the blind want to be accepted. If we succeed or fail we want to do it on our merits and not on a basis of some preconceived notion about our performance as a handicapped person."

"After the campaign was over, and Rockefeller was not re-elected, I was terminated like most of the staff, as I should have been," he added.

"I had worked some during the campaign with Harry Herget, another member of the Rockefeller staff. After the campaign we decided to have a try at it in the advertising and public relations business, so we founded Concept-three."

"Herget is one of those rare people who has never seemed to make any exception about my blindness since the first day we met," Sanders said.

"There have been clients who have had difficulty with the idea of working with someone who is blind," Ralph said. "I suspect that we have even lost a few accounts for that reason. But that's part of being blind in a sighted society."

In December 1971, Sanders' involvement in the National Federation of the Blind began in earnest with his election as president of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas.

In July 1972, he attended the national Convention of the NFB in Chicago.

"All of the remaining negative feelings about being blind were swept away as I lived through a week functioning with close to 1,500 blind persons. It was an experience I will never forget."

In December of that year, when Sanders went to Iowa to work for two days with Kenneth Jernigan, President of the NFB, he met a man who was to have a great effect on his life.

"Jernigan is a brilliant and articulate leader," Sanders said. "A part of his greatness is his warmth as a human being."

At the 1973 Convention, Sanders was elected to the board of the national organization, and in 1974 he moved up to the office of Second Vice-President.

"The NFB is a way of life for me," Sanders said. "Not the organization so much, but what the organization means. You see, it involves understanding that the real problem facing the blind is not blindness, but the public's attitude about blindness," he explained.

"I now recognize that the only way society will change to accept blindness is through the work of the NFB, that is—through the collective efforts of the blind of this Nation fighting together for our share of this society."

Sanders' love for journalism is being realized through the NFB. One of his duties is national press relations for the organization.

"This assignment is rewarding because it allows me to stay in contact with the news media, and it is exciting to work with the networks and the other national media."

Sanders continued, "We are undertaking the education of the news media about the proper image of blindness. Until now, the news media, by and large, have looked upon the blind as material for features but not really for serious news stories, no matter what the occasion.

"It is difficult to get a reporter, and particularly an editor, to see it any differently."

To illustrate his point, Sanders cited a recent decision handed down by the United States District Court of Colorado ordering the Denver public schools to recruit and hire blind teachers.

"This is perhaps the most significant legal battle ever won by the blind," he said. "Had it been any other group of Americans, it certainly would have been carried by the networks as a major story. But since it merely involved the blind, it went neglected."

Sanders believes that the project of educating the press is much like that the NFB undertakes for the public at large.

"The news media personnel share the same myths and misconceptions about

blindness as does the general public," he said. "They still believe blindness is a tragedy and that the blind, for the most part, can't compete in the regular community."

"It is important, however, that we educate the media so that they can help educate the public through the stories they carry, instead of reenforcing the negative image already held by the public."

At twenty-nine, Sanders is already established in his profession, is a leader in the community, and a national officer in a

major national organization. Where does he go from here?

"I have a lot of professional ambition," Ralph noted. "I am certain, however, that my ambitions will change as I grow personally. The only thing I know for sure about my future is that I will always be involved in the National Federation of the Blind."

"At least," he added, "until we have achieved our ultimate objective of the complete integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality." □

AGENCY ACCREDITATION AND QUALITY SERVICES TO THE BLIND: WHERE IS THE CONNECTION?

BY

RAMI RABBY

Introduction

A number of events have taken place recently, within the field of work with the blind, which continue to bring into serious question the quality of services and programs for the blind (both public and private) in the State of Illinois. In particular, the agencies involved are the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind (1850 West Roosevelt, Chicago), a non-governmental, multi-service, rehabilitation agency which, although it is a private corporation, does use public funds through work contracted to it by State rehabilitation agencies, and the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute (1150 South Wood, Chicago), an agency of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, which provides prevocational rehabilitation and training services for the blind.

Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind

Background.—The blind of Illinois have, for a long time, criticized the management of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind for its oppressive, arrogant, and patronizing behavior toward them.

For years, the board of directors of the Lighthouse adamantly refused to elect to its membership even a single blind person who might represent the views and interests of the blind public which is served by the agency. Today, there are two token blind directors on the board, who represent no views except their own, and in whom the blind of Illinois have no confidence whatsoever. Despite repeated requests by the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois to meet with the directors of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind in order to discuss with them the possibility of adding blind consumer representatives to the board, we have so far failed to do so, and are still awaiting a reply from Edward Silber, president of the Lighthouse, to our last letter of March 1, 1975.

However, such unresponsive behavior might be excused were management's treatment of the employees in its own sheltered workshop more in keeping with the accepted practices and standards of a twentieth-century work location. It is not! Wages paid to

the employees in the Lighthouse workshop have always fallen far below the currently accepted minimum of \$2.10 an hour. Lighthouse management has always justified the abominably low wages which it is paying its sheltered workshop employees by claiming that their employees are not, in fact, employees at all but rather rehabilitation clients who are being prepared for placement in open industry. Such a claim is, at best, cruel and misleading, since many of the workers in the workshop have been employed by the Lighthouse for five, ten, and fifteen years, and regard the Lighthouse as their permanent place of employment and not as a rehabilitation center.

In addition, the management of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind has always taken aggressive measures to nip in the bud any attempts by the workshop employees to unionize the workshop, relying for its protection on a 1962 decision by the National Labor Relations Board not to assert jurisdiction over not-for-profit organizations.

It is the view of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois that the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind is fast becoming a disgrace to the community in which it is located. Perhaps the best illustration of this fact is that within the past two years, this agency has been obliged to dismiss two executive directors, and as of this writing, has failed to locate a third.

Recent Events.—On Wednesday, August 13, a large majority (70+ out of 105) of the sheltered workshop employees at the Lighthouse sought recognition from Lighthouse management as a collective bargaining unit, with the Communications Workers of America as their representative (see Exhibit 1).

On Friday, August 22, Edward Silber, Lighthouse president, responded to the

Communications Workers of America, denying the employees' claim that a majority of them were seeking recognition (despite the fact that union pledge cards had been signed and were available for inspection), and declaring that the best interests of the sheltered workshop employees would be served if they were to deal directly with the board of directors rather than through a third party (see Exhibit 2).

On Friday, September 5, the workshop employees took up Silber's challenge to "deal with them directly," and invited him to meet with them on Saturday, September 13 (see Exhibit 3). September 13 came and went; Edward Silber did not make an appearance; Edward Silber did not even respond to the employees' letter. As of this writing, a hearing on the employees' petition for election with the National Labor Relations Board is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, September 30, at the NLRB's Chicago office. In addition, the employees of the Lighthouse workshop have appealed to the Illinois Department of Labor for assistance in determining their majority status (see Exhibits 4 and 5).

Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute

Background.—As with the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute has, for many years, served as the target of heavy criticism from the blind clients and potential clients it serves. The principal issue involved has been the demeaning attitude of the Institute's superintendent, Tom Murphy, and his staff toward the blind, their refusal to permit blind consumer representatives to participate in shaping and planning the direction of the Institute's programs, and their apparent belief that blind people are helpless, incompetent, and unable to make intelligent decisions regarding their own rehabilitation

and training. This attitude was highlighted during the 79th General Assembly when Tom Murphy and his staff successfully spearheaded a massive campaign to defeat House Bill 717, which would have given the blind consumers of services provided by the Department of Children and Family Services a substantive, *advisory* voice in decisions affecting the Department's programs for the blind.

Recent Events.—Since the principal goal of any rehabilitative activity must necessarily be the complete integration of the blind person in question into the normal economic and social life of his or her community, one might expect that this philosophy would govern the rehabilitation and training activities of the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute. Yet, within the past month, IVHI has joined forces with Wright Junior College (3400 North Austin, Chicago) in running a series of courses directed specially for the blind and segregated from the general public (see Exhibit 6). While the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois believes that certain subjects, such as Braille or cane travel, can appropriately be taught in a specialized setting, most other subjects, such as swimming, home repairs, sewing, et cetera, in which both the blind and sighted public have an interest, should appropriately be taught in a fully integrated environment. Accordingly, by segregating the courses for the blind at Wright Junior College, the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute is acting in the very worst interests of the blind people it is designed to serve.

Perhaps the greatest harm to the blind clients and potential clients of these two agencies, to the taxpayer, and to those members of the general public who would make private contributions to work with the blind, has been done by the fact that Mary Lee Leahy, Director of the Department of Children and Family Services, and the Board of Directors of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind have sought and received

accreditation for IVHI and the Lighthouse from the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC). NAC is a New York-based, private agency which has set itself up as the standard-setting and accrediting body in the field of work with the blind, and which is, unfortunately, recognized by the Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as an approved accrediting organization.

Although the National Federation of the Blind believes strongly in the concept of accreditation for agencies serving the blind, we have criticized NAC ever since its inception for its lack of responsiveness and sensitivity to the views and needs of the blind recipients of services, and for the unrealistic and inappropriate standards it sets for agencies serving the blind. In recent months, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has withdrawn its funding of NAC for these very reasons, while the chairman of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind has publicly attacked NAC's standards as irrelevant to the true interests and objectives of the blind, and serving only to protect the vested interests of the professional rehabilitation workers (see Exhibit 7). [Reprinted in *The Braille Monitor*, July 1975.] In addition, the Executive Director of the Mississippi Industries for the Blind has demonstrated, in a letter addressed to all sheltered workshops for the blind, that there exists no connection between the accreditation granted by the National Accreditation Council and the quality of an agency's programs and services, and how, at his own agency, it is employee satisfaction and labor peace which provide the truest measure of quality service and effective performance (see Exhibit 8). [Reprinted in *The Braille Monitor*, August 1975.]

During the months of June and July of this year, the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois pleaded with Mary Lee Leahy, Director of the Department of

Children and Family Services, to halt the efforts of the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute, Community Services for the Visually Handicapped, and the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School to seek NAC accreditation, pending further study of NAC and its standards. However, she was unwilling to do so, and as a result, the above three agencies for the blind (which are all under her direction) are now accredited by NAC. It is the belief of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois that the recent events at the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind and the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute, which we have described, provide ample evidence not only that these two agencies do not deserve any kind of accredited status at this time but also that accreditation by the National Accreditation Council is meaningless and misleading, and should therefore be revoked by *any* agency for the blind which has already received it.

The NAC accreditation process is costly in terms of staff time and public funds. At the same time, accreditation provides the taxpayer and the private contributor with some kind of seal of public and professional approval. It is the view of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois that Mary Lee Leahy and the board of directors of the Lighthouse are perpetrating a gigantic deception on the taxpayer and the private contributor, by having them believe that these two agencies provide quality services to the blind. The blind of Illinois know differently!

The National Federation of the Blind of Illinois calls upon:

(1) The Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to remove NAC from its list of approved accrediting organizations.

(2) Mary Lee Leahy, Director of the Department of Children and Family Services, to revoke the NAC accreditation of the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute, Community Services for the Visually Handicapped, and the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School.

(3) Mary Lee Leahy to withdraw IVHI's participation in the segregated courses for the blind undertaken by Wright Junior College, and in all programs for the blind undertaken by the Department of Children and Family Services, to promote, at all times, the fullest possible integration of the blind into the economic and social life of their communities.

(4) Wright Junior College to rescind its segregated courses for the blind from its adult education curriculum, and begin promoting the education of the blind in an integrated environment.

(5) The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and other State agencies contracting for services from the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind to bring pressure to bear upon the Lighthouse to revoke its accreditation from NAC.

(6) The Community Fund of Chicago to suspend its financial support of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, pending satisfactory resolution of the sheltered workshop employees' grievances and the accreditation issue.

(7) The Board of Directors for the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind to undertake immediate discussions with the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois regarding the addition of blind consumer representatives to the agency's board of directors.

(8) The National Labor Relations Board to assert jurisdiction in the case filed against

the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind by the Communications Workers of America.

(9) The Board of Directors of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind to join the Communications Workers of America in inviting the Illinois Department of Labor to conduct a representation election in the sheltered workshop of the Chicago Lighthouse.

EXHIBIT 1

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA,
Elk Grove Village, Illinois, August 13, 1975.

Mr. MILTON SAMUELSON,
Executive Director,
Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind,
Chicago, Illinois.

DEAR MR. SAMUELSON: A majority of the workers with the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind have designated the Communications Workers of America as their representative for the purpose of collective bargaining.

We, therefore, request recognition of the Communications Workers of America as exclusive bargaining agent for these workers.

We recommend that a meeting be held at the 1717 West Seventy-fourth Street work location for the purpose of bargaining an agreement for recognition and the wages, hours, and working conditions of these employees.

We would appreciate a reply by Monday, August 25, 1975.

Very truly yours,

EDWARD A. DISCH,
CWA Representative.

EXHIBIT 2

THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND,
Chicago, Illinois, August 22, 1975.

Mr. EDWARD DISCH,
Communications Workers of America,
Elk Grove Village, Illinois.

DEAR MR. DISCH: With regard to your letter of August 13, 1975, the Lighthouse board of directors has determined to deny your request to be recognized as exclusive bargaining agent for their employees. The board does not believe that the CWA represents a majority of their employees and does not believe that there is any obligation to recognize the CWA as representative of its employees. You may, of course, file a petition for election with the NLRB, but the board does not believe they will, or should, assert jurisdiction. See *The Lighthouse for the Blind*, 1962 CCH NLRB ¶ 11,725 (1962).

We appreciate your concern for our employees. However, we believe it is in the best interests of our employees to deal with them directly and not through a third party.

Very truly yours,

EDWARD S. SILBER,
President of the Board of Directors.

EXHIBIT 3

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA,
Elk Grove Village, Illinois, Sept. 5, 1975.

Mr. EDWARD S. SILBER,
President of the Board of Directors,
Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind,
Chicago, Illinois.

DEAR MR. SILBER: We the undersigned employees at the Lighthouse are very disappointed by your answer to Mr. Disch's

letter requesting recognition for our Union. You and your board's refusal to accept the fact that we represent a majority of the people working at the Lighthouse is unfair and unjustified. We have over seventy-five (75) people signed on cards.

Because you have refused recognition (see attached letter) we met and voted to:
(1) File an election petition with the NLRB;
(2) File with the Illinois Department of Labor for assistance in determining our majority status; and (3) Make a news release to the Chicago area news media.

Finally, we voted to request that you meet with us on Saturday, September 13, at 3:00 p.m., at our meeting place - CWA Local -5050, Room 1519, at 130 North Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois. The purpose of our meeting is to establish with you that we have a majority of the people behind us with their signatures on "show-of-interest" cards.

Kindly contact Ed Disch, CWA Representative, to set the ground rules for the meeting.

We are looking forward to meeting you on Saturday, September 13, 1975.

Yours truly,

MOSRO HOWARD,
CHUCK EBERLE,
BARBARA KASPER,
VICTOR WARDE,
CHARLES IVORY,
JOSEPH THOMAS,
RAMI RABBY,
DOROTHEA ENGRAM,
DAVE CALDWELL,
DONALD MACE,
MARTHA PITTMAN,
LEROY BARKER,
FRED HOSKINS,
LINDA RUTHER,
DICK MOHILL,
SIDNEY DAVIS.

EXHIBIT 4

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA,
Elk Grove Village, Illinois, Sept. 8, 1975.

Mr. DONALD JOHNSON,
*Director, Illinois Department of Labor,
Chicago, Illinois.*

DEAR MR. JOHNSON: On August 13, 1975, we notified the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind that we represented a majority of the employees at the Lighthouse. The Lighthouse doubts that we do represent a majority of the employees. Attached are copies of the correspondence.

We solicit your help in settling this dispute over recognition. Kindly contact me at your earliest available moment to arrange the details.

Sincerely,

EDWARD A. DISCH,
CWA Representative.

EXHIBIT 5

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA,
Elk Grove Village, Illinois, Sept. 12, 1975.

Mr. DONALD JOHNSON,
*Director, Illinois Department of Labor,
Chicago, Illinois.*

DEAR MR. JOHNSON: John Deikus from your office called today in response to our letter dated September 8, regarding our request for recognition as bargaining agent for the employees of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. We must say that four days is a remarkable response time.

John reported that he spoke with the attorney for the Lighthouse. Their position is to abide by the decision of the NLRB.

John further stated that if the NLRB rules against us that we will take the case to public hearing under Chapter 10, Section 28. We would like to take this action immediately, if possible.

Thanks for your prompt attention to our request.

Sincerely,

EDWARD A. DISCH,
CWA Representative.

EXHIBIT 6

115-813V BRAILLE I (READING): This course presents a fundamental approach to the Braille system of writing. Emphasis will be placed on note-taking and the development of reading skills. An introduction to Braille speed reading is included for those with advanced skills. *Saturday, September 20, 9:00 a.m., Wright College—Room 111, Nanette Green.*

115-113V HOME REPAIR: The course will consist of eight, one hundred-minute lessons covering many areas of home mechanics including: general repair, electricity, electronics, plumbing, single carpentry, safety, and dealing with outside service personnel. The course will also include resources for

acquiring adapted tools and equipment. Lists of books in Braille and recorded form, periodicals will be recommended. *Saturday, September 20, 10:45 a.m., Wright College—Room 113, Franklin Green.*

115-000V MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND: This course will offer a program in mobility techniques for the visually impaired. It will stress basic travel skills to be used at home and in other familiar surroundings; the use of a sighted guide while traveling in public; cane travel inside and in familiar surroundings, and an introduction to outside independent travel. This is a good basic course for those who wish to learn how [to travel:] to be given on a one-to-one basis. *Saturday, September 20, 10:45 a.m., Wright College—Room 117, Thomas Murphy.*

115-201V SEWING: A machine sewing class with special techniques for the blind and visually handicapped. The class will cover the preparation of a special adaptive pattern, use of a special needle and a magnetic guide. *Saturday, September 20, 11:30 a.m., Wright College—Room 105, Florence Loan.*

115-125P PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR HEALTH (SWIMMING): All forms of swimming skills from beginning to advanced, coupled with some basic diving. Women bring swim suits and caps, men bring swim suits. *Saturday, September 20, 10:45 a.m., Wright College—Pool, Tom Jennings.* □

BIGGER AND BETTER IN '76: NFB CONVENTION BULLETIN

"Come one, come all. Recent NFB Conventions have been getting bigger and better every year and 1976 will be no exception. . . . The Convention will be held in Los Angeles, on the Pacific Coast in the heart of Disneyland country. Southern Hospitality (California style) will abound. . . . California is truly a wonderful State and the people of our California affiliate are as fine as their State. They know how to spread on the hospitality, and you won't want to miss this one. . . . When you come to Los Angeles you are on the Pacific Coast in the heart of Hollywood movieland, not very far from Mexico, reasonably close to Las Vegas, and the heart of one of the most scenic and historical settings anywhere. . . . It will be a Convention to remember and cherish."

The quotations are the words of our own President Jernigan when he wrote about the California Convention in 1967. All that he said then is a number of years truer now. To the delights mentioned above we must add the many which are closer at hand in the City of Los Angeles such as the famous zoo; Olivera Street, which is a bit of old Spanish America; Farmers Market, where produce is piled high and a variety of good foods is available for instant consumption when you become ravenously hungry from all the appetizing sights and smells. The Los Angeles area has two major league baseball teams; and there are concerts and other

entertainment that one associates with a large metropolitan area. The Biltmore Hotel is right downtown. Public transportation is good in the business shopping area where minibuses are available at twenty-five cents a ride.

The larger attendance will require bigger and better prizes and we hope that each chapter will help to make this a spectacular event. Money is easy and good as a prize, but it is not as much fun as receiving a gift and doesn't leave anything to "show and tell" and to remember after the Convention is over. Send all prizes, as soon as possible, to Anthony G. Mannino, Executive Secretary, NFB of California, 730 South Western Avenue, Suite 201, Los Angeles, California 90005.

The dates of the 1976 Convention: July 4 through 9. The place: the Biltmore Hotel. Space at the Biltmore is limited to one thousand rooms, so reserve early. The prices are right: \$15 for singles; \$16 for doubles and twins; \$22 for triples; and \$28 for four in a room.

You can make your reservations by writing to the Biltmore Hotel, 515 South Olive, Los Angeles, California 90013; or by telephone: (800) 252-0175 without charge to you.

SEE YOU IN LOS ANGELES! □

"EVERBODY HATES WALTER BUT THE VOTERS" AND THE BLIND

Walter Baring of Nevada died on July 15, 1975, and the blind of the Nation lost a true friend and ardent supporter. The most quoted phrase in the newstories was "Everybody hates Walter but the voters." For almost a quarter of a century he was Nevada's Representative in the House. Party leaders, lobbyists, especially those fostering foreign aid, the U.S. Treasury, were not his friends. He was an independent man who knew his own mind. Though he ran on the Democratic ticket, he did not always lend his support to Democrats and frequently did not receive theirs. But it was the voters who kept him in Washington. They kept him in Washington because he believed that he represented them and that it was his duty to serve his constituents—the people of his State. And serve them he did. When any citizen of Nevada had a problem or a complaint and he wrote to his Congressman he knew an answer would be forthcoming before the week was out. He went to bat for "his people" and soon became known as the first Congressional ombudsman.

Congressman Walter Baring, Jr., was a conservative despite his party label. As is true a good deal of the time in the legislative history of the blind, it is the conservatives who most often carry the ball for us. But not always. It was Senator John F. Kennedy who introduced S. 2411, our right to organize bill, in 1957. Not too many days went by before Congressman Baring introduced its companion in the House. At that time he wrote to the President of the National Federation of the Blind:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C., July 9, 1957.

Doctor JACOBUS tenBROEK,
Berkeley, California.

DEAR DOCTOR tenBROEK: I have shared with my Administrative Assistant, Tim Seward, the inspiration of witnessing from the sidelines your courageous fight to preserve the right of self-expression which belongs to all of the blind citizens of this country, and to insure their right to speak in their own behalf through authorized representatives of their blind organizations.

I was elected to Congress as a representative of *all* of the people of my State, and I am particularly proud of the privilege of representing our citizens who are blind. I am proud of what they have accomplished for themselves in the past few years, and I believe wholeheartedly in their right to organize, as has labor, to advance their own opportunities. I feel very strongly that they should be consulted in planning all programs operated within the State that would concern their welfare. While I have spoken here of the blind population of Nevada, the blind of our entire country have, and should be allowed to enjoy the same rights.

It is a privilege, therefore, to introduce in the House of Representatives, a bill similar to S. 2411 introduced by Senator Kennedy. Copies of my bill will be mailed to you in the next two or three days when it is in print.

I fully realize that there may be agencies of our Government that by habit have assumed the role of your official spokesman, and that it may take time to accustom these agencies to work with your organizational representatives as they do with other accredited organizations. The national labor movement has experienced similar growing pains.

It is not only imperative that this legislation be enacted, but that public hearings be scheduled at the earliest possible moment, so that the general public may know of the roadblocks you have encountered in your crusade for social and economic equality.

My congratulations to you and your able staff for the splendid democratic work you are doing.

Sincerely,

WALTER S. BARING,
Congressman for Nevada.

The letter expresses on its own Congressman Baring's understanding of our problems and why we needed such legislation. Both Senator Kennedy and Congressman Baring worked hard for passage of this legislation but the agencies had too much power at that time. However, the National Federation of the Blind together with its affiliates were successful in having right-to-organize bills adopted in a number of states.

Congressman Baring and his Administrative Assistant, Tim Seward, became our friends. The NFB used their offices as a home-away-from-home base and they lent their influence to our efforts whenever they could.

As Senator Howard W. Cannon said in his remarks on the Floor, July 16, 1975, "In any political history of the State of Nevada, the name of Walter S. Baring will have a lasting place, bearing testimony to his deep devotion to the people he served so long." And Walter Baring's place in the annals of the history of the blind of this Nation is secure. □

BLIND LOBBY ONE OF STRONGEST ON CAPITOL HILL

BY

STEWART LYTLI

[Reprinted by courtesy of the *Birmingham (Ala.) Post-Herald.*]

WASHINGTON. — There is a relatively little-known lobby here that wields a mean stick when riled or when necessary to protect and assist its members.

The group has won strong influence in certain quarters of the Congress, jousts successfully with such agencies as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the U.S.

Civil Service Commission, and Amtrak and is now taking on certain life and health insurance firms in the private sector.

The group is the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), which has been in operation since 1940 and has chalked up some impressive victories for its membership of an estimated fifty thousand blind Americans.

It is probably the best organized and undoubtedly the most aggressive of the several associations of the handicapped.

Describing NFB, one member said, "They'll picket you in a minute. And if you really get them riled, they'll come up there and beat you with their white canes."

Neither the NFB leadership nor its record of court cases and lobbying efforts on behalf of its members tends to discourage its image as a militant organization.

And some believe NFB may spearhead an emerging civil rights drive for the blind, and possibly the handicapped in general.

There are many parallels between discrimination against the blind and against blacks and other racial minorities. They both face and are combatting legal, economic, and social discriminations, some sanctioned by law and regulation while others are maintained merely by social attitudes.

The NFB has challenged and continues to challenge many of the legal barriers, particularly those its members faced in employment. One of its first and greatest victories was in winning the right of the blind to compete for Civil Service jobs.

Until 1948, when Congress tried to end the discrimination, the blind and other handicapped persons were not permitted to take examinations for government employment. The Civil Service Commission, however, thwarted Congress with a loophole in the law by declaring sight was needed for all government jobs.

NFB fought and lost the battle in the courts, but mounted increasing pressure on the commission through Congress until 1953 when the commission opened one of its

hardest tests to blind persons. Official NFB history states that twice as many blind as sighted persons passed the examination.

The organization continued to press the Civil Service Commission to open the doors for the blind. And as a result, the handicapped in general like blacks and other racial minorities have found government employment to be a fountain of job opportunity.

In employment NFB engaged repeatedly in fighting local school boards who refuse to hire the blind as teachers. NFB has challenged many of these boards in courts and usually won. It has also mounted an advertising campaign to convince the general public that a blind teacher is just as adequate as sighted ones.

But employment is only one concern of NFB. Like most other handicapped individuals the blind have encountered discrimination in travel.

Until last year, the national passenger railroad system, Amtrak, had a policy that required the blind to make advance arrangements or provide an attendant to travel on the train. NFB at its annual Convention in Chicago passed resolutions condemning the Amtrak policy and authorizing court action against the train system if necessary.

The publicity that resulted, according to an NFB spokesman, was enough to force Amtrak to review its policy and make changes.

The association's clout as a lobby also enabled it to convince FAA officials that the blind should not be lumped in with other handicapped individuals when developing regulations affecting the handicapped as airline passengers.

Yet last month Allegheny Airlines forced a blind couple on a flight from Washington to Philadelphia to fly on separate flights because the crew considered them together to be a safety hazard in an emergency. NFB is on the brink of legal action against the airline.

While much of the efforts of NFB and its state affiliates, including a relatively young one in Alabama, have been directed at ending discrimination of public agencies, it is increasingly directing its efforts at private

institutions. And for the moment NFB is trying to convince life and health insurance firms to revise their policies to make it easier and less expensive for the blind to obtain insurance.

NFB is convinced and is trying to convince the rest of the public that a well-trained blind person is no more dangerous to himself or those around them than anyone else. "If a blind person has proper training, and if he has opportunity, blindness is only a physical nuisance," NFB literature says. □

AID TO BLIND PERSONS: UPDATE

The following information is based on data issued by HEW under date of August 12, 1975, and reflects the increases which occurred in SSI levels of assistance for July 1975. The flat grants to blind persons in those states which elected to supplement the SSI payments refer to those in independent living arrangements and who transferred to SSI on January 1, 1974 (in a few of the state the grant is slightly lower for those who came on the rolls after January 1, 1974).

It will be noted that there are twenty-nine states which supplement the SSI grant of \$158 a month for an individual and \$237 for a couple. The amounts shown below represent the total of the SSI and state supplemental payments. In the nine states which have asterisks, the grants paid to blind persons are higher than those paid to aged persons.

STATE	INDIVIDUALS	COUPLES
*Alabama	\$171	\$250
Alaska	\$300	\$420
*California	\$292	\$584
*Colorado	\$164	\$328

STATE	INDIVIDUALS	COUPLES
Connecticut	\$250	\$304
*Delaware	\$158	\$300
Hawaii	\$175	\$265
Idaho	\$221	\$286
Illinois	\$175	\$237
*Indiana	\$158	\$288
*Iowa	\$176	\$273
Kansas	\$203	\$242
Maine	\$168	\$252
*Massachusetts	\$292	\$584
Michigan	\$184	\$255
Minnesota	\$189	\$275
Nebraska	\$225	\$304
*Nevada	\$265	\$530
New Hampshire	\$173	\$237
New Jersey	\$182	\$250
New York	\$219	\$313
Oklahoma	\$185	\$291
*Oregon	\$200	\$286
Pennsylvania	\$178	\$267
Rhode Island	\$195	\$296
South Dakota	\$190	\$237
Vermont	\$177	\$239
Washington	\$194	\$277
Wisconsin	\$228	\$342

States not listed do not supplement the

basic SSI grants of \$158 for individuals and \$237 for couples. Those states are as follows: Arizona, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana,

Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wyoming. □

IDAHO LIONS TAKE LEAD

IDAHO-OREGON LIONS SIGHT
CONSERVATION FOUNDATION, INC.,
Boise, Idaho, June 26, 1975.

Mr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
*President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: At their 1972 state convention, the members of the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho discussed with us the possibility of the Lions using a fundraising symbol other than the white cane. Through this discussion it became obvious to our representative, Mr. George Wehman, that our use of the white cane for fundraising was very likely causing confusion in the mind of the public. Several alternatives were suggested and the group passed a resolution in this regard (copy enclosed). Because Lions desire to assist the blind and cooperate with them in their efforts, Mr. Wehman agreed to work with the Lions of Idaho in designing a new symbol which would be more appropriate to sight conservation.

Our new symbol consists of an eye with the word "Lions" appearing at the top of the symbol and the word "sight" appearing at the bottom of the symbol. In appreciation, the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho passed a resolution at their 1975 convention supporting this symbol (copy enclosed) and donated fifty dollars to our sight conservation program.

We would like to see Lions International adopt this symbol for sight conservation activities. Therefore, I am soliciting your aid and that of the National Federation of the Blind in encouraging Lions International in this endeavor. It is my belief that it would be appropriate for the Lions and the blind of the Nation to work together to this end. Your cooperation and assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

W. D. "BILL" HALLOCK,
President.

NFB OF IDAHO RESOLUTION 72-07

WHEREAS the white cane is symbolic of blind persons' aspirations toward lives of independence and productivity; and

WHEREAS the fundraising campaign currently conducted by the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight Conservation Foundation, Inc., utilizes reference to the white cane in a manner which fosters confusion concerning both the direction of the fundraising endeavor and the use of the proceeds: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho in convention assembled this thirteenth day of August

1972 that this organization requests that the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight Conservation Foundation, Inc., seriously consider discontinuing allusions to the white cane for fundraising purposes in order better to pursue their commendable objective of sight restoration.

NFB OF IDAHO
RESOLUTION 75-05

WHEREAS the white cane is symbolic of blind persons' aspirations toward lives of independence and productivity; and

WHEREAS in recent years the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Conservation Foundation has cooperated with the blind citizens of this State by recognizing the white cane as the symbol of their efforts toward achieving full participation in society; and

WHEREAS as a result of this recognition, the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Conservation Foundation has adopted as its new symbol for fundraising the blue and white eye: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho in convention assembled this twenty-fourth day of May 1975 that this organization commends the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Conservation Foundation for its recognition of the white cane as the symbol of independence and full citizenship

of blind persons, and further commends the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Conservation Foundation for its adoption of the blue and white eye as its symbol for fundraising and for its valuable community services of sight restoration, sight and hearing screening, and support of the State Library for the Blind.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
Des Moines, Iowa, July 21, 1975.

Mr. W. D. HALLOCK,
*President, Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight
Conservation Foundation, Inc.,
Boise, Idaho.*

DEAR MR. HALLOCK: I have your letter, and I thank you for it. Certainly the action of the Lions of your district in wishing to work in partnership and cooperation with the organized blind is a good thing, as is your recognition of the fact that the white cane is a symbol which should not properly belong to the Lions. Our organizations should work together, and we welcome this constructive action on the part of the Lions. We will do what we can to promote acceptance of the new symbol by Lions International.

Cordially,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind.

□

STATE DEPARTMENT DIALOGUE ON HIRING THE BLIND CONTINUES

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D.C., July 3, 1975.

Hon. FRANK CHURCH,
United States Senate,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR CHURCH: The Secretary has asked me to reply to your letter of June 13 expressing interest in the Department's policies on employment of the blind.

Miss Maryanne Masterson wrote to the Department asking if it would be possible for a blind person to take the Foreign Service written examination. She was advised that she could take the examination, but subsequently appointment to the Foreign Service would be precluded by her inability, as a result of her being blind, to meet Foreign Service medical standards.

The medical standards required of Foreign Service Officers are higher than those required for employment by the Department in this country. Foreign Service personnel are subject to assignment to posts all over the world, many of which have limited medical facilities and a variety of health hazards and personal security problems not encountered in the United States. Our high standards are designed both to safeguard the health of the individual employee and to ensure that the work of the Foreign Service can be accomplished expeditiously.

Miss Masterson recently visited the Department of State and discussed her career interests with departmental medical and personnel officers. Since Foreign Service medical standards do not apply to domestic employment in the Department

of State, Miss Masterson was given appropriate forms and encouraged to submit a formal application for domestic employment.

In addition, Department officials recently met with Mr. James Gashel, Washington representative of the National Federation of the Blind. They indicated to Mr. Gashel the Department's willingness to employ qualified blind persons for positions in the Foreign Service or the Civil Service in Washington and to seek to identify positions overseas in which they might serve without the requirement for worldwide availability. On the basis of experience with such employment we would seek to broaden opportunities for the blind employee and review the matter further. We look forward to future discussions with the National Federation of the Blind.

I hope you will call on me if you believe we could be of further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

KEMPTON B. JENKINS,
Acting Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D.C., June 27, 1975.

Mr. JAMES GASHEL,
National Federation of the Blind,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. GASHEL: Thank you for your generosity with your time for our meeting yesterday in what I know must have been a

busy week of preparations for your Chicago meeting. It was helpful to have the viewpoints of the Federation and to have the benefit of your knowledge and experience in an area which you understand so much better than most of us.

I hope that I made clear the positive and active desire of the Department to give opportunities for every person to use his talents fully. We are, as I said, committed to offering employment for positions in the United States to qualified blind people on the same non-discriminatory basis as all other Federal agencies.

You said you were not familiar with the personnel system of the Department of State or with the nature of our work overseas, and I described for you the principle of worldwide availability which is essential in the use of our small Foreign Service to meet constantly changing conditions around the world. I think I made clear our willingness to employ qualified blind persons for positions in the Foreign Service or the Civil Service in Washington and to seek to identify positions overseas in which they might serve without the requirement for worldwide availability. On the basis of experience with such employment we would seek to broaden their opportunities and review the matter further. I thank you for your willingness to continue our conversation so that I might better understand the blind employee and that you might gain a fuller knowledge of the work of the Foreign Service.

Our further decisions will depend on expanding our mutual understanding in these conversations and on the experience which we may gain with blind employees. I told you, I think, of a number of conflicting responsibilities which also require my attention in the week ahead. Both of these

circumstances lead me to delineate your kind invitation to participate in your Convention, where I would not be able to speak to the questions still under consideration. I hope that the Convention is as successful as you wish and that you will extend my respectful greetings to the officials and members of the Federation. I shall be glad to meet with them or further with you to continue our earlier conversation.

Sincerely yours,

HUGH G. APPLING,
Director of Personnel.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D.C., August 15, 1975.

Mr. JAMES GASHEL,
*National Federation of the Blind,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. GASHEL: Thank you for your letter of August 4 and its enclosures which I have read with interest. I am glad to know that your Convention was successful and that you believe we can continue our conversations usefully.

In my view, the usefulness of further discussion will depend in considerable measure on being careful that we understand each other fully and exactly. We have failed in this respect in our first try. The first and second paragraphs of the Resolution (75-02) which you sent present the position of the Department incorrectly and unfairly. The fifth paragraph is at best a misconception of the facts and it is in contradiction with your letter which indicates that I was invited "to face the collective leadership of the blind of the United States." I suppose we

can find the opportunities we both seek by confrontation, but I think we should be able to make better progress by collaboration in what we recognize as an exploration of a new course.

If a meeting is necessary to debate rules for negotiation, I am willing to send a representative to meet with you, but I would much prefer to meet with you personally to take up at once, in open discussion, the substance of the matter at hand. I suggest that, at least until we are ready to set down our mutual understandings, discussion without tape or written recording will permit us to explore the questions at ease and to try out ideas without commitment. I would not need to have a lot of people with me but cannot carry on the discussions usefully unless I have expert advisers. There are a number of offices in the State Department whose help we shall need to develop a sound policy. In my experience, confusion is avoided if the group is small and if only one person acts as spokesman. I would take this role except occasionally when an expert might be asked to speak briefly to a technical point.

Over the time just ahead I must be acting for several other people and I shall be absent in September. If you wish to call to set a day and time to meet during the last week of August or the first week in October, I shall be glad to see you in my office.

Sincerely yours,

HUGH G. APPLING,
Director of Personnel.

Chicago, Illinois, August 22, 1975.

Mr. MARVIN KALB,
*CBS - News Bureau,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. KALB: The purpose of this letter is to seek your assistance in posing a question to Dr. Kissinger at an appropriate point, during some press conference, in the near future. The issue in question is not likely to affect the global balance of power nor disturb the present structure of international relations in the world. However, the issue is one for which the Secretary of State has overall responsibility, and which involves serious violation of basic human and civil rights.

For the past four months, the National Federation of the Blind has been engaged in lengthy correspondence with Dr. Kissinger's staff as well as with the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in an attempt to persuade the Department of State to cease its discriminatory hiring practices toward blind Americans. As you will see from the enclosed packet of letters, the Department of State openly and arbitrarily refuses to hire blind applicants for foreign service officer positions, thus violating a long-standing Federal Government policy, not to mention the principle of equal protection embodied in the United States Constitution.

So far our efforts to resolve this issue have proved fruitless, and it is our belief that they may continue to be so unless we can bring this matter to Dr. Kissinger's personal attention, in a public arena, such as a press conference.

Mr. Kalb, you are the only diplomatic correspondent we are approaching at this time, regarding this problem. We have selected you because of the obvious stature and respect you enjoy in the Department of State and because of your unusually detailed knowledge of Dr. Kissinger's personality and temperament. You may feel that a press conference is not the appropriate forum in which to bring this issue to the Secretary's attention, but rather that an off-the-record discussion would present a better opportunity. You are the one best equipped to make that judgement, and we shall respect your decision. However, we should be most grateful to you if you would act upon this request at your earliest convenience. Should you decide not to take any action on this matter, please let us know so that we may continue to explore other possible alternatives.

Should you require any additional information, please feel free to contact either myself or Mr. James Gashel, National Federation of the Blind, Suite 212, Dupont Circle Building, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20036; telephone (202) 785-2974.

I will look forward to hearing from you, and am,

Yours sincerely,

RAMI RABBY, *Chairman,
Cultural Exchange and International
Program Committee,
National Federation of the Blind.*

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
Washington, D.C., August 28, 1975.

Mr. HUGH G. APPLING,
*Director of Personnel,
Department of State,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. APPLING: Your letter of August 15 which purports to be a response to my letter of August 4 is one of the more novel responses I have received recently. You begin by taking umbrage over what you regard as a failure to be careful that we understand each other fully and exactly. I agree.

In my letter of August 4 I indicated our willingness to schedule future meetings subject to three conditions. First, I expressed the view that our next meeting should occur in the offices of the Federation since you were kind enough to host the first one at the Department of State. I have read your letter several times. Nowhere do I find reference to this invitation. The last sentence of your letter reads: "If you wish to call to set a date and time to meet during the last week of August or the first week of October, I shall be glad to see you in my office." If this was intended to respond to our invitation to host the next meeting, be it so. The record of responsiveness you are building may be read by one and all.

The second of the three conditions contained in my August 4 letter dealt with the question of numbers of participants for future conferences. I stated that, while I personally had no objection to meeting with five officials of the Department of State, rules of courtesy and diplomacy

would dictate arriving at a more equitable number of participants from each respective organization. You will recall that I suggested two from each, and I invited you to specify an alternative number if you should wish to do so. Again, your letter is silent on this point. While you indicate your desire to keep the numbers low and to have one spokesman (yourself), you specifically ignore the question of equal representation, stating instead that "there are a number of offices in the State Department whose help we shall need to develop sound policy." Very well, what does this mean? How many offices? What about the question of equal representation? We think this is important as you did in refusing to come to Chicago to meet with a group of us. We agree, the numbers should be low, but they should also be equal.

Since, presumably, our future meetings will be held in Washington, financing the travel costs of NFB representatives becomes a factor to consider. For the most part we depend upon contributions from members and friends of the organization in meeting our operating costs. Many of these folks are receiving public assistance or Social Security payments since many opportunities for employment have not yet been opened. All things considered we feel that two representatives from NFB and two from the Department of State constitutes a fair and reasonable number. If we cannot settle this matter among the four of us, perhaps it cannot be settled at this level.

Related to the matter of representation at future meetings is our position that medical personnel are not appropriate participants from this point forward. This was also recognized by Senator Sparkman in his June letter to the Secretary. Your August 15 letter is silent on this point altogether.

In summary, if we are going to attempt to communicate and to be careful to understand one another fully and exactly, let us both do so. What I endeavored to make clear in my August 4 letter is that the blind are not prepared to send their representative crawling to the Department of State with his hat in his hand. We are American citizens who have rights and responsibilities under the Constitution of the United States. We are not some small foreign power seeking whatever benefits Uncle Sam feels he can throw our way. We feel that our basic rights are being denied, and we believe that responsible officials of the Department of State at least owe us the courtesy of negotiating a solution under equitable circumstances.

Your desire to have us initiate subsequent meetings to be held with you and your staff of advisors at the headquarters of the State Department is therefore unsatisfactory to us.

We believe that you now have an opportunity to act in good faith by initiating our next meeting under the terms contained in my letter of August 4. This would constitute affirmative action on your part and we do hope that you will seize the opportunity.

Of course, all of this discussion may be academic. As you know, several Members of the Congress have taken an interest in the matter we are discussing. Many have asked if Capitol Hill might serve as an appropriate forum for our future negotiations. For a time I was reluctant to accept such offers, feeling that we could work together on a different plane. I have now been notified by Congressman Christopher Dodd that he wishes to undertake a personal review of the issues. I believe that you are aware that he has scheduled a meeting

for September 10 at 2:00 p.m. in his office. We of the Federation are pleased to accept, and we look forward to meeting with the State Department representatives on that occasion.

I am sure that you understand that the meeting called by Congressman Dodd need not preclude further initiatives which you would take to schedule a meeting with us. The last week of August having come and gone and considering your absence during September, we would hope that you might wish to get together with us during the first week of October. You may have your office call to arrange the exact date and time. In accordance with the provisions of my August 4 letter, we should be notified in advance how many advisors you wish to bring and who such advisors will be. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Cordially yours,

JAMES GASHEL,
Chief, Washington Office.

P.S.—You will observe that I am sending copies of this letter along with copies of our previous correspondence to the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
Washington, D.C., September 15, 1975.

Mr. HUGH G. APPLING,
*Director of Personnel,
U.S. Department of State,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. APPLING: I am writing this letter to you to set forth our understanding of

the points raised during our September 10 meeting with Congressman Christopher Dodd and your representatives. I think this is only fair to you personally, since you could not be present, and to the others who have been interested in this matter, since they were not on hand.

Mr. Burns of your staff served as the State Department's spokesman. He began by expressing the Department's "willingness to employ qualified blind persons for positions in the Foreign Service or the Civil Service in Washington and to seek to identify positions overseas in which they might serve without the requirement for worldwide availability." He expressed the Department's commitment to continue discussions with the National Federation of the Blind.

Both Mr. Rabby and I, serving as representatives of the NFB, commended the State Department for its willingness to employ qualified blind persons in selected overseas positions, and we recognized this as a change in former policy. Mr. Burns responded that the Department had accepted the principle of "seeking to identify" positions abroad in which qualified blind persons might serve.

Recognizing the difference in these statements, I asked if the Department would be willing to prepare and distribute a release which would solicit blind candidates for foreign service reserve officer positions. I indicated that I had obtained copies of such releases, advertising FSRO positions to be filled by women and minorities. I stated that it would be a fine thing if the State Department would take the position that the blind are one of the minorities covered in such releases, but I speculated that this would not be the case. Your representatives confirmed this judgment and

pledged to look into the matter of advertising for blind FSRO's.

During this portion of the meeting, Mr. Burns expressed the view that the State Department would have problems in modifying the concept of worldwide availability to the physical capacities and requirements of the blind foreign service officer. He indicated that this would be one of the key issues on the agenda of future meetings with NFB. In response Mr. Rabby stated that it was not NFB's desire to modify the concept of worldwide availability in any way whatsoever. He explained that blind persons live everywhere in the world and that many travel all over the world in connection with their employment. He related his own experience as a native of Israel and as a student at Oxford University in England. Mr. Rabby assured Mr. Burns and the others present that we were prepared to meet the requirements for worldwide availability and that we should be expected to do so.

Mr. Burns stated the Department's view that such a judgment must be based on sound medical advice as provided by the Department's medical staff. He objected to NFB's position that the participation of medical personnel is inappropriate, stating that the Department must be free to call upon the advice of a number of its offices.

At this, I conceded that we might agree to the participation of medical and other personnel in future conferences, subject to the condition that we be accorded the privilege of having an equivalent staff. I explained that we objected to being confronted with an entire bureaucracy. I specified that meetings of five or ten State Department representatives and one or two Federation participants were unacceptable to us. I pointed out that if it was fair for Mr. Appling

to be surrounded by his staff of advisors, it was only right for me (or Mr. Rabby) to be surrounded by ours. There was general agreement that this position was a reasonable one.

I indicated that if we were to go the route of staffs of advisors, some advanced planning would be necessary. While NFB is able to meet certain costs associated with these conferences, and while we do possess the necessary experts, we probably do not have access to the necessary financial resources to bring together a staff equivalent to that which the State Department might want to assemble. I suggested that this problem might be resolved if the Department would be willing to employ us as consultants. This would be in keeping with the Department's stated desire to learn more about the potentials of the blind as employees. Mr. Burns indicated that he would see if such an arrangement could be made.

Mr. Burns stated that the Department was reviewing employment of the blind in the foreign service as a part of its assessment of positions which might appropriately be filled by "qualified handicapped individuals." The view was expressed that NFB's arguments concerning the blind would, without question, apply to persons with other disabilities—the deaf, the orthopedically impaired, the cerebral palsied, persons with heart conditions, and others.

I explained that we were not discussing employment of the handicapped in the foreign service. I stated that our discussions and letters had been confined to the subject of employment of the blind and that we were not prepared to extend our arguments to cover individuals with various physical and mental disabilities. I indicated that if we were going down that track we would

become involved in endless arguments about the validity of various medical standards and their effect upon persons and their particular disabilities. I stated that we would be prepared to discuss employment of the blind and that other plans might be made exclusive of these discussions. This point was understood and accepted. Mr. Burns explained, as a concluding note, that a response would be prepared to my August 28 letter to Mr. Appling and that this response would include the points made in the meeting. Mr. Dodd asked to be kept informed of all developments. Throughout the meeting Mr. Dodd seemed puzzled concerning the State Department's reasoning for non-acceptance of the blind as foreign service officers. He expressed a desire to be of continuing assistance in resolving this situation.

I hope you will find this summary of our September 10 meeting to be useful. I prepared it since I thought you might. We understand the importance of continued

communication, and this is being provided to you toward that end.

Cordially yours,

JAMES GASHEL,
Chief, Washington Office.

cc: Senator John Sparkman
Senator Mike Mansfield
Senator Frank Church
Senator Stuart Symington
Senator Claiborne Pell
Senator Gale W. McGee
Senator George S. McGovern
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
Senator Dick Clark
Senator Joseph R. Biden
Senator Clifford P. Case
Senator Jacob K. Javits
Senator Hugh Scott
Senator James B. Pearson
Senator Charles H. Percy
Senator Robert P. Griffin
Senator Howard H. Baker
Congressman Christopher Dodd

□

IS YOU IS OR IS YOU AIN'T: FAA AND BLIND TRAVELERS

After hearings held during 1974 at which we put in appearances, writing letters, discussions with officials, and after being assured that the Regulations issued by the FAA would not apply to the blind, the blind are still having trouble traveling by themselves and James Gashel, Chief of our Washington Office, is still hard at work trying to get the FAA officials to make up their minds and set the matter straight with airlines generally.

At the Chicago Convention in July 1975 the whole situation was brought to everyone's attention when Steve Hoad, Federationist from Maine had trouble flying from Lewiston, Maine, to Boston and on to Chicago to attend our meeting. Steve Hoad was traveling alone. Air New England Airlines, on which he was ticketed to fly from Lewiston, Maine, to Boston, Massachusetts, refused to fly him at all without an attendant and it was only after arduous argument that they agreed to take him as a passenger but only if he would sign a release. He was most anxious to get to Chicago and our Convention, and he signed the document—a disclaimer which should make its author blush with shame. It reads as follows:

PASSENGER CONSENT AND RELEASE

Full Name of Passenger _____
Permanent Address _____
Flight No. _____ Date _____
Origin _____ Destination _____

I hereby request permission to travel on the Air New England Airlines flight identified above. I agree to follow all orders and to permit such physical assistance as the Air New England Airlines station and flight

personnel deem necessary for my safety or the safety and comfort of other passengers on the said flight.

I hereby represent that I can fly as a passenger aboard a jet or propeller aircraft without physical or medical risk to others or to myself and without requiring more attention from the personnel operating the aircraft and attending its passengers than is ordinarily required by the average passenger. In making the foregoing representation I understand that due to irregular flight operations the flight may be longer in time than is indicated by the published schedule and/or may terminate at a point other than the scheduled destination. In particular, my condition does not involve any unusual likelihood of lapse of consciousness or tendency to become nauseated.

I understand and agree that, in case of a change of circumstances or subsequently acquired information or if it should at any time become necessary to ensure safety or for the comfort of other passengers, Air New England Airlines may refuse me passage or remove me at any point. In that event Air New England Airlines will refund the unused portion of my fare and the fare of anyone accompanying me, but shall have no further obligation.

I hereby remise, release, and forever discharge Air New England Airlines, Inc., its employees and agents and anyone acting on its behalf or at its request of and from all debts, demands, actions, causes of action, suits, accounts, covenants, contracts, agreements, damages, and any and all claims, demands, and liabilities whatsoever of every name and nature against any of them

arising out of or in connection with the said flight, including (without limiting the generality of the foregoing) any damage to property, personal injury or suffering sustained while being assisted onto or off any Air New England Airlines aircraft.

Signed _____

If the passenger is not twenty-one years of age, the following must also be signed:

As the parent or legal guardian of the above-named passenger, I request that he be accepted for transportation on the flight identified above. On my own behalf and on behalf of said passenger, I join in the foregoing representations, agreements, and release, which are incorporated herein by this reference. And I further expressly stipulate and agree to indemnify and hold forever harmless the said Air New England Airlines, Inc., its employees and agents and anyone acting on its behalf or at its request against loss from any claim, action, or demand that may hereafter be made or brought by said passenger or any other person for the purpose of enforcing a claim for damages on account of any such damage, injury, or suffering.

Signed _____

Relationship to passenger _____

Address _____

An outraged Convention adopted a strong resolution when this blatant discrimination was reported. In compliance with the second Resolve contained in Resolution 75-39, which called upon the President of the Federation to "take all steps necessary to remedy this situation," James Gashel, Chief of our Washington Office, contacted the

Federal Aviation Administration. That agency sent a letter to Mr. Clifton F. von Kann, Senior Vice-President, Operations and Airports, Air Transport Association of America, and to Joseph C. Whitney, President of Air New England Airlines. That letter reads:

Washington, D.C., August 26, 1975.

DEAR MR. VON KANN: We have been advised by the National Federation of the Blind that some airlines are refusing to carry blind persons. We are told the reason given is that such carriage is contrary to the Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs). This, of course, is not true as there are no FARs governing the air transportation of the handicapped. In our Notice of Proposed Rule Making 74-25, issued on July 2, 1974, we proposed regulations that would require the airlines to carry the deaf or the blind, since we do not consider these persons to be handicapped insofar as safety of flight is concerned. We believe these people are capable of safely caring for themselves without assistance.

We would very much appreciate it if you would advise your station personnel and flight and cabin crews that the carriage of the blind or the deaf is not prohibited by the FARs and that any decision not to carry them rests solely with the particular airline.

Sincerely,

R. P. SKULLY,
*Director, Flight Standards Service,
Federal Aviation Administration.*

That bit of fatuousness having been added to the flames, Mr. Gashel tried to extinguish

the fire with some reasonable analysis. On August 28, 1975, he wrote to R. P. Skully, Director, Flight Standards Service, Federal Aviation Administration, in Washington, D.C., as follows:

DEAR MR. SKULLY: I have read with interest your duplicate letters to Mr. Clifton von Kann of the Air Transport Association of America and Mr. Joseph Whitney of Air New England Airlines. Perhaps I should have expected the customary bureaucratic approach, but my brief acquaintance with you somehow led me to believe that you are a man who says what he means and means what he says. Perhaps it was the television cameras and the microphones which made you appear to be straightforward on the issues. The cameras and the spotlights gone; the microphones turned off; your letters in hand; we can now reflect on what you said and what you did.

As is more and more the case with many Federal documents which flow across my desk, my reaction to your letters goes something like this: "The government giveth, and the government taketh away." On the one hand you say:

In our notice of Proposed Rule Making 74-25, issued on July 2, 1974, we proposed regulations that would require the airlines to carry the deaf or the blind, since we do not consider these persons to be handicapped insofar as safety of flight is concerned. We believe these people are capable of safely caring for themselves without assistance.

Probably I should have expected the next sentence, which reads:

We should very much appreciate it if you would advise your station personnel and flight and cabin crews that the carriage of the blind or the deaf is not prohibited by the FARs and that any decision not to carry them rests solely with the particular airline.

I contend that your letter changes nothing and that it is inconsistent with the position you took before the press on Monday. By implication your final sentence suggests that the carriage of blind passengers is optional, at the discretion of the individual airline. I wonder, do the airlines, at their discretion, have the option of refusing to carry black persons, women, American Indians, or employees of the FAA? You and I both know that they do not. Section 404(b) of the Federal Aviation Act reads as follows:

No carrier or foreign carrier shall make, give, or cause any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any particular person, port, locality, or description of traffic in air transportation in any respect whatsoever or subject any particular person, port, locality, or description of traffic in air transportation to any unjust discrimination or any undue or unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage in any respect whatsoever.

Since you take the position that the blind are capable of safely caring for themselves, why are you not prepared to inform the airlines that it is the opinion of the FAA that the full provisions of Section 404(b) shall apply?

Disappointed as I was with the content of your letter to Mr. von Kann, I must confess that I found your letter to Mr. Whitney of Air New England Airlines even more inadequate, in view of the circumstances with this particular airline. Since you told me in front of witnesses that you regard the Air New England Airline's Passenger Consent and Release form of doubtful legal validity, one wonders why you failed to share this viewpoint with Mr. Whitney. My memory is that you readily agreed that a blind passenger ought not to be required to sign such a form, yet you did not even mention this opinion in your letter to Mr. Whitney. You and the others in the

room were well aware of the particular situation we face with Air New England Airlines. Merely duplicating your letter to the Air Transport Association (which is, of necessity, more general) in no way fulfills your commitment to deal with Air New England Airlines.

In all of this there is another issue which remains to be resolved. As I explained to you on Monday, we oppose the restricted seating provision contained in the proposed regulations. For your personal reference, I am sending herewith a copy of the comment which we submitted. While we know that it is your position that this issue can only be handled in the final regulations, we cannot understand your failure to inform the airlines that the FAA has no current regulations prohibiting the blind from being seated in exit row seats. Your failure to notify the airlines in this regard will result in the continuation of restrictive seating policies now practiced by nearly every carrier. I would urge you to ask yourself why you would write a letter to the Air Transport Association stating that airlines may not refuse service to a blind passenger on the basis of FAA regulations, while not at the same time, informing the Air Transport Association that the airlines may not refuse to seat blind persons in seats adjacent to the exits on the basis of FAA regulations.

In all candor, I think you did not do what you implied you would do when we met in your office and before the press on Monday. Furthermore, I think you know this. You may wish to say that your letter is only factual, and that you could not have done any differently than you did. If you want to stand on that, be it so, but I believe that the record of your statements to the media will not support this contention. For example, during the press conference you stated that studies had revealed that the

blind are capable of evacuating an aircraft as rapidly as those who can see. This statement was duly reported by the media, but it was not included in your letters to the Air Transport Association and Air New England Airlines. Similarly, it is a fact that the FAA does not have regulations which require airlines to restrict blind passengers from exit row seats, but you did not so inform or advise the airlines.

In view of the foregoing I would think that you would want to write a follow-up letter amending and clarifying your letters of August 26. When you do this you could cover all of the points raised in this letter by stating that the FAA has no regulations requiring special arrangements, including seating, for blind passengers. You should cite the results of the studies recently conducted by the FAA and you should express the opinion that the FAA sees no problem with blind people as passengers. This would be entirely consistent with the facts, and it would be consistent with your public statements. Finally, you should cite Section 404(b) of the Federal Aviation Act and advise the airlines that these provisions apply to the blind as they do to others, since questions of safety of flight are not involved.

We anticipate your affirmative response on the issues raised in this letter. The blind people who gathered on the street at 800 Independence Avenue, Southwest, on August 25, 1975, are but a small segment of the total population affected. They were prepared to march once to bring public attention to bear on the problems they face. They are prepared to do so again in greater numbers.

Cordially yours,

JAMES GASHFL,
Chief, Washington Office.

cc: William T. Coleman, Jr., Secretary of
Transportation

James E. Dow, Administrator, Federal
Aviation Administration

Alex Kuchero, *U.S. News and World
Report*

Jerry Hannifin, *Time* magazine

Jeff Tannenbaum, *The Wall Street Jour-
nal*

Mary Flannery, *The Washington Post*

Stan Bernard, NBC-Television News

Lee Thornton, CBS News

David Garcia, ABC News

Stuart Little, Scripps-Howard News-
papers

At this writing we have heard nothing further from the FAA nor seen any new regulations in the *Federal Register*. Whether Mr. Gashel's efforts to make them understand are successful must await their pleasure. Someone said that the way to get from the Occident to China was to put one foot in front of the other. But the FAA not only will not permit us to fly but insists that we do it on one leg. □

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

SUBMITTED BY
STEPHEN O. BENSON

Editor's Note.—Stephen Benson is the first vice-president of the NFB of Illinois. Mr. Benson gives credit for the recipe to his mother, Mrs. Edythe Benson.

ZUCCHINI BREAD

Ingredients

3 eggs	1 tsp. salt
2 cups sugar	1 tsp. soda
1 cup oil	3 tsp. cinnamon
3 cups sifted flour	1 tsp. nutmeg
2 cups grated zucchini	3 tsp. vanilla extract
½ tsp. baking powder	1 cup chopped nuts (any kind)

Method

Beat eggs until light and foamy; add oil, sugar, salt, soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder and flour (sifted together). Mix well, until blended, then add zucchini and vanilla; finally, add nuts.

Divide the batter into two well-greased and floured loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for forty-five to sixty minutes or until done; test with a toothpick. □

MONITOR MINIATURES

On September 9, President Jernigan wrote to the *Monitor* editors as follows:

Walter Mussler, the president of our San Antonio Chapter, writes me that a member of our San Antonio Chapter contacted Colonel Bruce Canwright, who is the owner and operator of Bowlerama Bowling Lanes, to arrange for some of the local blind to do bowling. He says that Colonel Canwright refused, saying that he didn't want any blind or handicapped people bowling in his establishment since he had some of them there once and they damaged his lanes. The good Colonel did not say whether he had ever had a sighted person misbehave in his establishment. Apparently, as the Colonel sees it, all of us are to be lumped into one mass—possessing the same vices and (if any) the same virtues.

In any case Walter Mussler would appreciate it if blind persons throughout the country (particularly, blind bowlers) would write to Colonel Canwright expressing their displeasure at such behavior. Walter thinks it might help the good Colonel. Incidentally, copies of any letters should be sent to Walter. The relevant addresses are:

Colonel Bruce Canwright
Bowlerama Bowling Lanes
4719 Blanco
San Antonio, Texas 78212

Mr. Walter Mussler
518 W. Huisache
San Antonio, Texas 78218

* * * * *

Recently Joyce Scanlan, president of the NFB of Minnesota, told the Metropolitan

Transit Commission in Minneapolis that her organization doesn't want special bus privileges for blind persons, no special seating, no half fare, no free fare. Such measures "simply build up old stereotyped attitudes of the helpless blind person," she said, while most blind people really want to be independent and equal. The chairman of the commission pointed out that to qualify for Federal funds, the MTC must follow guidelines that provide at least half fare for handicapped people during non-rush hour periods and the blind, says the Federal Government, are handicapped. Mrs. Scanlan observed that "we're working on everybody," including Federal officials to try to change that definition.

* * * * *

Blind persons may benefit from two rulings of the Internal Revenue Service. In the first the IRS rules that parents who bought Braille editions of books and magazines for their blind child could deduct the cost as a medical expense. Only the amount exceeding the cost of regular editions is deductible. In its second ruling the IRS said that a blind employee who hired a reader in connection with his work could deduct the cost as a business expense.

* * * * *

The Riverside Chapter of the NFB of California recently held a unique fundraising effort, a tandem bike ride which turned out to be quite successful, raising over \$1,000 and it took only about one month to put it together. The chapter also received a good deal of favorable publicity.

* * * * *

The Minnesota Bulletin, publication of the NFB of Minnesota, reports that the organization won several impressive victories during the 1975 legislative session. The most significant of these was the adoption of a bill banning discrimination against blind and otherwise disabled persons in the purchase of life, health, and accident insurance. The new law will be administered by the State Department of Insurance and is even stronger than the one recently adopted in Massachusetts which is limited to life insurance only.

* * * * *

The Month's News, publication of the NFB of Illinois, reports that Governor Walker signed into law a bill which extends the coverage of the Illinois Fair Employment Practices Act to the handicapped. This was the climax of a long and arduous legislative campaign which NFB had conducted throughout the previous five months and was a tribute to the commitment of all members to the concept of equal employment opportunity for the blind. Unfortunately, the bill-signing ceremony was slightly marred by the unbecoming and inappropriate presence of a representative of the Illinois Federation of the Blind, the American Council affiliate, which had done little to speed the passage and enactment of this landmark legislation, but yet saw fit to come and bask undeservedly in the glory of those on whose backs he and his organization had taken a free ride throughout the campaign.

* * * * *

In its "Preliminary Report on Characteristics of Rehabilitated Clients," the Federal Rehabilitation Services of HEW states that for the fiscal year 1974 the occupations at

closure for all rehabilitants showed a staggering 14 percent as "homemakers," 11.2 percent in managerial occupations including vending stands, 1.6 percent as "unpaid family workers," and only 1.7 percent in all other occupations. How can the Federal Government continue to list "unpaid family workers" as rehabilitations?

* * * * *

The technological age has provided many solutions to the problems faced by blind persons, but the problems faced by the blind in the field of science itself have been largely overlooked. A new organization, Science for the Blind Products, was formed in 1973 to meet this need. Since its establishment, the organization has primarily worked to develop scientific instruments, such as meter readers for use by blind scientists in their employment situations. The organization is developing other instruments for general application in employment settings other than the scientific laboratory. Further information about the activities and items produced by Science for the Blind Products can be obtained from Science for the Blind Products, 221 Rockhill Road, Bala-Cynwyd, Pennsylvania 19004.

* * * * *

Medicaid (title XIX of the Social Security Act) is an assistance program designed to provide medical assistance to specified groups of needy individuals. Such persons are classified into two main groups according to their maintenance assistance status: (1) those who are authorized to receive money payments for their basic necessities under public assistance programs such as Supplemental Security Income and Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and

(2) those who are not receiving maintenance assistance payments even though they may, in fact, be eligible. Some states have exercised the option of including other needy persons who do not fall into any of the regular categories. According to a recent report by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), about 70 percent of the medical vendor payments were made for in-patient services, that is, hospitals (31.3%), skilled nursing facilities (20.6%), and intermediate care facilities (17.8%). Among other services, physicians' services and prescribed drugs represented 10.3 and 6.2 percent of total payments, respectively. Blindness as the basis of eligibility was claimed by 45,402 persons.

* * * * *

The National Office of the National Federation of the Blind has had a number of inquiries concerning the insulin syringes which we have been selling, as well as questions and concern about the upcoming conversion to U-100. We have done some research into this whole matter and this is what we have found:

Although the eventual result of this changeover will be the total phasing out of U-80 and U-40 forms and a complete concentration on U-100, this has not yet occurred. Doctors and pharmacists would like to effect this change as quickly as possible but there is apparently no absolute deadline. However, one authority states that U-80 will not be manufactured in the United States after January 1975.

Another authority indicates that while old U-80 and U-40 syringes might possibly be adjusted for U-100 insulin, this practice would considerably increase the risk of incorrect dosages.

Although U-100 syringes are manufactured in both reusable and disposable forms, one authority writes that such syringes are not available in sufficient supply to meet the needs in all areas of the United States.

Thus far, we have not been able to get orders filled for U-100 syringes which can be adapted for independent use by blind diabetics and the syringes we are selling are U-40's. □

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
2652 SHASTA ROAD
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94708

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 581
DES MOINES, IOWA